

## CREAM AND SUGAR FOR THE LOCAL BREW? TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS TO SUPPORT LOCAL SOLUTIONS

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### OVERVIEW

The brew of local solutions comes in many flavors and strengths in Maine's coastal communities and the Maine Coastal Program is there to provide the cream and sugar to lighten the brew (load) and sweeten the taste (task).

All too often, local issues can simmer away until the brew is dark and bitter. This can be the case with resolving land use conflicts, reaching a decision on a new harbor use, preserving working waterfronts, providing public access to the shore, supporting resource management like shellfish programs, and addressing other resource management issues.

In a home rule state like Maine, with a distributed CZ program that relies on the administration and implementation of core environmental and land use planning laws to achieve the State's coastal policy, many of the tough coastal development issues and problems come from the bottom up, from the local level.

In Maine the Coastal Program is designed to work with local municipalities and towns where many of the decisions that affect waterfront and harbor uses are ultimately made. And these local solutions need to be tailored to the local circumstances. This presentation will cover the variety of technical assistance grants and other support provided to help coastal communities brew their own solutions.

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Technical assistance grants are made to coastal communities to help with harbor planning, right of way re-discovery, land acquisition, planning studies, waterfront development, and so forth. Assistance grants are usually fairly modest, ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000, often depending on the amount of funds available through the Coastal Zone Management program or other fund sources.

We have run both open competitive award programs and funded projects on a case by case basis as the need arises. Financial awards do have a local match requirement, and include in the grant award a provisions for using the work as a case study for posting on a website and positioning the recipient to participate in informational/education programs if asked to share their work.

Some examples of funded projects and outcomes:

<b>Project Summary</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
Provided in-kind planning guidance and technical experts to help the Town of Cranberry Isles figure out how to manage a new mainland access property for the island community.	Formation of a Municipal Facilities Management Authority.
TA grant to the Town of Jonesboro for municipal fishing pier design and cost estimate by a marine engineering firm.	Successfully competed for and received a Small Harbor Improvement Program grant for pier improvements.
Planning grant to Harpswell for revising and fine tuning land use regulations in Cundy's Harbor to better accommodate commercial fishing activities.	Incorporation of needed zoning and regulatory changes in the community's updated Comprehensive Plan.
Planning grant to the Town of Boothbay Harbor to support local efforts to consider future use of the municipal fish pier.	Consultant prepared study of the harbor to support public forums and discussion sessions. Carlo says ...
TA grant for harbor walk plan and design and other working waterfront elements on the Belfast waterfront.	Extension of a public walk along the waterfront in conjunction with an on-going re-development program.
Funding for engineering consulting support for reconfiguration of the Castine harbor mooring field.	New layout and reposition of moorings to accommodate more and larger boats.
Planning grant to Cranberry Isles to support development of harbor management ordinance.	Draft ordinance before town voters at 2007 town meeting.
Funding to support on-going waterfront redevelopment plans on the Ellsworth riverfront.	Development of a design and plan of action to provide public spaces and access to the river front in the context of the re-use of existing commercial lot.
TA grant for harbor management plan in the Town of Harrington to support harbor ordinance.	Working with the regional planning organization, a harbor plan and ordinance will be prepared for municipal adoption.
TA grant for harbor management plan and ordinance in Machiasport.	Working with the regional planning organization, a harbor plan and ordinance will be prepared for municipal adoption.
Financial support for costs associated with mooring field re-configurations in Mount Desert harbors.	Work successfully completed by Town with equipment contractor support.
In Rockland harbor a survey to find and remove bottom junk impeding the use of a large vessel anchorage area.	Work successfully completed by the City, removing wire cable and other lost debris.

Grant to Town of Rockport for planning and design work on improvements to existing maritime park infrastructure.	Improved parking and utilization of the Rockport Maritime Park.
TA grant to support a consultant study of potential new water access sites suitable for trailer boat launching and related parking areas.	Study report with maps useful to selectmen and other town officials as the basis for perusing opportunities for a new boating access site.
Harbor planning grant to Town of Stockton Springs for joint harbor planning work with the Town of Searsport.	Combined with other funding to support the work of an engineering consulting firm.
Funding for a municipal pier and mooring plan improvements at an existing public boat access site in Westport Island.	Planning and design work is done, construction is pending.
<i>Moosabec: the Downeast fishing community of Beals and Jonesport</i> , a brochure about living in a Maine fishing community.	Printed and distributed through local realtors and town offices to land purchasers and new arrivals in the two towns.
<i>Harpswell's working waterfronts</i> , a brochure about living in the commercial fishing community of Harpswell.	Published and on-line available from the Town of Harpswell.
Maine's Downeast Coast, a brochure about living in commercial fishing communities along the Washington County coast.	
Right of Way Rediscovery Grants to municipalities to reestablish lost and forgotten public access rights to the shore.	See ROW program list of projects. Three to five small (up to \$2,500) grants per year.
Planning guides for harbor planning, right of way re-discovery projects, and municipal comprehensive plans.	Available on line, distributed hard copy as needed, updating the ROW handbook.
Assistance with public funding for land conservation and water access projects, utilizing Land for Maine's Future funds and providing access for federal Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program funding.	See list of LMF funded projects in the Maine Coastal Zone.
Upon request, visits with town harbor or waterfront committees to discuss issues and review available tools as a stepping stone to a TA grant or other assistance.	Visits with committees in Rockport, Bristol, S. Bristol, Cushing, St George, Stockton Springs
Support and advice upon request, for local officials, committee members, and others on harbor issues, technical assistance, etc.	Including inquiries from Ogunquit, Saco, Kennebunkport, Owlshead, Kittery, York, Machiasport, Cutler, Beals

## OTHER TOOLS AND AIDS

A variety of planning guides and handbooks are available to help towns undertake projects. Handbooks are available for harbor planning, and Right of Way access projects. Studies and reports are available through the website or in hardcopy related to working waterfronts, resource inventories, and zoning and land use regulations. And case studies of harbor plans, access protection, and land conservation. In addition coastal program staff can provide access to other technical expertise that might be available in state and federal agencies.

## PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES

My operating principle is to listen carefully to local issues and concerns to determine how technical assistance can be best provided to serve the needs of the town. Pre-proposal discussion of a potential project is a good way to screen ideas and help local planners zero in on the real needs. Even with broadcast announcements of grant availability I encourage potential applicants to contact us for a discussion of a potential project.

Getting the word out about the availability of technical assistance programs and resources is vitally important. And keeping it fresh in peoples minds with reminders and repeated notices seems too be necessary as local players change and busy memories can be short. We use a number of newsletters that go to local officials to keep the information flowing. The Maine Coastal Program website is a crucial source of information, and participation in a variety of public meetings and events is another good way to let people know what is available.

And finally cultivating partnerships and working relationships with other coastal programs and advocacy organizations can be a linkage to good projects. Organizations such as the Sea Grant Marine Team, regional planning commissions, working waterfront coalitions, and coastal community development advocates make great partners.